Minutes
Architectural Review Board
January 11, 2016
Council Chambers, City Hall
Fredericksburg, Virginia

Members Present	Members Absent	Staff
John Harris, Chair		Erik Nelson
Sabina Weitzman, Vice Chair		Charles Johnston
Susan Pates		Phaun Moore
John Van Zandt		
Jamie Scully		
Kerri S. Barile		
Kenneth McFarland		

Dr. Barile called the Architectural Review Board meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

OPENING REMARKS

Dr. Barile determined that a quorum was present and asked if public notice requirements had been met.

Mr. Johnston stated that an affidavit of the public notice ad had been distributed to the Board. He also noted that the notice had been reviewed by the City Attorney.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Dr. Barile asked for nominations.

Ms. Weitzman nominated Mr. Harris as Chairperson for the Architectural Review Board. Mr. Harris accepted the nomination. Mr. Van Zandt seconded. Mr. Harris was elected Chair by a 6-0-1 vote, with Mr. Harris abstaining.

Mr. Van Zandt nominated Ms. Weitzman as Vice-Chairperson for the Architectural Review Board. Ms. Weitzman accepted the nomination. Mr. McFarland seconded. Ms. Weitzman was elected Vice-Chair by a 6-0-1 vote, with Ms. Weitzman abstaining.

Mr. Harris assumed the Chair.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mr. Harris asked if there were any changes or additions to the agenda.

The following items were added to Other Business:

#4 – Mr. McFarland added a brief discussion of public notice.
#5 – Ms. Weitzman added a brief discussion of the December 14, 2015 ARB actions regarding exterior alterations at 128 Caroline Street and fence at 240 Charles Street.
#6 – Mr. Nelson added an informal review of 406 Dunmore Street.
#7 – Mr. Nelson added an informal review of a deck at 819 Caroline Street, adjacent to Spencer Devon Brewing.
#8 – Dr. Barile added a brief discussion of items from the ongoing litigation.

Mr. Van Zandt made a motion to accept the agenda as amended. Mr. McFarland seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

REVIEW OF MINUTES

Mr. Harris asked if there were changes to the meeting minutes from December 14, 2015.

Ms. Weitzman added a statement under Applications – New Business on page 2, and on page 3 she replaced "Ms. Young responded that she did" with "Ms. Young stated that she wholly understood the situation with respect to the possibility that the permit could be rendered void".

Dr. Barile corrected page 2 under Applications – New Business "her attorneys" should be replaced with "their attorneys".

Mr. Scully made a motion to approve the December 14, 2015 meeting minutes as amended. Dr. Barile seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Johnston suggested that the Board table review of the supplemental meeting minutes from December 15, 2015 because the City Attorney had indicated some corrections regarding the closed session needed to be made.

Dr. Barile made a motion to table review of the supplemental meeting minutes. Ms. Weitzman seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

DISCLOSURE OF EX PARTE COMMUNICATIONS

Mr. Harris asked if any Board member had engaged in *ex parte* communications on any item before the Board. Mr. McFarland stated that he had a very brief conversation with Mr. Holloway who stated that he would be attending the ARB meeting to speak on the Mary Washington House project.

DISCLOSURE OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Mr. Harris asked if any Board member had a conflict of interest for any item before the Board.

Ms. Weitzman said she had a conflict with Item #1 as she was the designer.

Dr. Barile said she had a conflict with Item #4, as she was a member of the project team.

APPLICATIONS – NEW BUSINESS (Public Hearing)

1. **Washington Heritage Museums – Exterior alterations at 1200 Charles Street (Mary Washington House), consisting of installation of mechanical equipment and a wood screen and stair rail.**

Anne Darron, Executive Director of Washington Heritage Museums and Jay Holloway of Habalis Construction, were present. Ms. Darron said that they would be removing a window unit that was visible from the street and adding air conditioning that would greatly improve the climate control. Ms. Darron said they chose not to place the mechanical unit in an area where it would be visible on tours.

Emily Taggart-Schricker, of 801 Marye Street and president of the Historic Fredericksburg Foundation, stated that the HFFI holds an easement on the property and their Real Estate Committee had approved the project.

Mr. McFarland said he would like more detail on the profile of the rail and balusters and asked if they had samples.

Mr. Holloway said the railing would be code compliant with 1 x 3 inch pickets, 4 x 4 inch solid wood posts, and the top and bottom rails would be 2 x 4 inch pieces with chamfered edges. He said the railings would mimic the fence at the front of the house. Mr. Holloway said that the current railing was approximately a foot away from the steps and was not safe.

Mr. McFarland clarified that the stair rail would not be attached to the steps.

Dr. Barile asked what was currently in the spot where the brick pavers were being proposed.

Mr. Holloway said that it was a garden and they were going to relocate the plants. He said the new pavers would be reclaimed brick, set in sand, with a gravel base.

Dr. Barile mentioned that if there were disturbances greater than 6 inches, she would recommend archaeology.

Mr. Van Zandt made a motion to approve the installation of mechanical equipment and a wood screen and stair rail, as submitted. Mr. McFarland seconded.

Dr. Barile suggested a friendly amendment to encourage archaeology prior to ground disturbance.

Mr. Van Zandt accepted the amendment. Mr. McFarland seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

2. **James McGhee – Exterior alterations at 121 Caroline Street, consisting of installation of front porch.**

The applicant was present. There was no public comment.

Mr. McGhee distributed additional drawings to the Board and reviewed the details of his proposal. He noted that water drainage from the roof had rotted the door.

Dr. Barile clarified that the roof would be a barrel vault rather than gable and would mimic the arch of the windows.

Mr. McGhee said yes and that it would be barrel vaulted so the roof would not interfere with the left dormer.

Ms. Weitzman asked how they were going to treat the edges. She also asked how they established the height.

Mr. McGhee said they had to clear the door as well as provide enough room for the framing.

Dr. Barile questioned the use of metal for the roof cladding.

Mr. McGhee said the pitch of the roof would be too shallow for shingles.

Dr. Barile clarified that there was shingle on the rest of the roof. She commented that it would be jarring to use metal for the porch and said that metal was not characteristic of a 1940s Colonial Revival style building.

Ms. Weitzman asked if they had considered an awning similar to what was at 1209 Lafayette Boulevard.

Mr. McGhee said there was insufficient clearance to establish a porch roof below the existing eaves.

Mr. Scully said that the window arch was a character defining feature, but the canopy had a heavy feel.

Mr. Van Zandt agreed that the style of the canopy was too heavy and said that the front panel needed to be downsized.

Ms. Weitzman suggested that they have a work session to allow the applicant to revise his plans. Mr. McGhee said that would be fine.

Mr. Van Zandt made a motion to table the application. Ms. Weitzman seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

The Board and Mr. McGhee agreed to meet on January 25, 2016 at 7:00 p.m. for a work session. Ms. Weitzman said it would be useful to see an elevation.

3. **City of Fredericksburg – Installation of brick walls along or near front property lines at 1014 Charles Street and 1011 Prince Edward Street.**

Bill Freehling, Assistant Director of Economic Development, was present. There was no public comment.

Mr. Freehling said that the walls will be complimentary to the landscape and that they would be consistent with the wall at the Baptist Church lot on Princess Anne Street.

Ms. Weitzman commented that the brick walls looked long and not braced.

Dr. Barile asked for clarification on the dimensions.

Mr. Freehling said the walls would be approximately 8 inches wide and 40 inches tall. The top would be level.

Mr. McFarland asked if the walls were going to replicate the brick of the church. He added that it is usually a good idea to bring a brick sample.

Mr. Scully asked why they wanted to build a wall at all.

Mr. Freehling said that it had been recommended by the City to create a hard edge for the parking lot, which would also screen the parked vehicles.

Mr. Johnston stated the Unified Development Ordinance specifies that there is to be buffering for parking.

Ms. Weitzman made a motion to approve the installation of the brick walls, as presented. Dr. Barile seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

4. **Fredericksburg City Schools – Exterior alterations at 201 Ferdinand Street (Old Walker Grant School), consisting of installation of mechanical equipment, replacement of windows, addition of improved entryways, and other modifications.**

Susan Pryor and Doug Westmoreland, of Moseley Architects, were present. Mr. Westmoreland gave a short presentation and reviewed their proposals.

James McGhee, of 600 Caroline Street, suggested an alternative to the aluminum clad windows. He said the Hopes window had a thermal break in it to allow for 1 inch mullions.

Mr. Westmoreland said that product would be cost prohibitive.

Ms. Weitzman said that it was a beautiful project. She asked if the sloping eve on the existing building would be maintained.

Mr. Westmoreland said it would be.

Ms. Weitzman complimented Moseley Architects for maintaining the elegance of the original school design. The new window mullions took their cues from the present units. She said it was a delicate, but thorough reworking of the building.

Mr. McFarland said he agreed with Ms. Weitzman about the structure, but the rooftop mechanical units were a distraction. He asked if there were any options other than placing them on the roof.

Mr. Westmoreland said the units would take up thousands of square feet if they were inside the building. He said that rooftop units were not unusual for schools. Mr. Westmoreland said the units were high because of the energy recovery wheel. Energy efficient units are larger.

Mr. Johnston commented that the units looked like a giant turbine.

Mr. Scully asked if the units could be moved more toward the center of the roof, where the building itself would screen them.

Ms. Pryor said that the units have to be placed where there is support in the structure.

Mr. Scully asked why they were proposing to replace the windows, rather than restore them.

Mr. Westmoreland said that it would not be energy or cost efficient to retain them.

Mr. Nelson commented that the Department of Historic Resources has allowed window replacement for tax credit projects as was done at the Gas Works.

Dr. Barile said that the Department of Historic Resources had changed their position on window replacement. She added that she had a conflict of interest, but was just noting that.

Mr. Scully said that the Board had turned down homeowners in the past who proposed replacement of windows.

Mr. Westmoreland said repairing the windows would be expensive and the school system would have to pay for the additional cost, without a strong return on the investment.

Mr. Nelson suggested the Board consider a conceptual approval and allow the applicants to explore the questions raised and return with more details.

Mr. Van Zandt made a motion to approve the conceptual renderings of the building with the condition that they return for the windows and study options for reducing the appearance of the rooftop mechanical units. Ms. Weitzman seconded. The motion carried 6-0-1 with Dr. Barile abstaining.

Mr. Harris complimented the applicants' presentation.

OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Nelson suggested that the Board allow Items # 6 & 7 to be heard first because the applicants were present. The Board agreed.

6. Informal review – 406 Dunmore Street.

Mr. Nelson informed the Board that the windows had been replaced in the 1980s when the houses were remodeled. He said the applicant wanted to replace those 1980s windows with 1 over 1 vinyl units.

The Board and Mr. Samuel discussed the possibilities for replacing/repairing the windows. Mr. Samuel was advised to explore other options.

7. Informal review of a deck in the 800 block of Caroline Street, next to Spencer Devon Brewing.

James McGhee reviewed and discussed his proposal for a deck to be built next to Spencer Devon Brewing.

1. Transmittal of Planning Commission agenda.

Mr. Nelson transmitted the Planning Commission agenda for January 13, 2016. Mr. Johnston added that the Medicorp Properties application had been withdrawn.

2. Update on 305 Charles Street.

Mr. Nelson informed the Board that the structure had been removed.

3. Update on 314-316 Frederick Street.

Mr. Nelson said he had visited the site to check out the possible painted brick. He reported that the addition was built with a newer type of brick than the original and had been painted some time in the past to mask the difference. There had been no recent painting.

4. Discussion of public notice requirements.

Mr. McFarland suggested that the public notices include the ARB website information.

5. Discussion of the December 14, 2015 ARB actions regarding exterior alterations at 128 Caroline Street and fence at 240 Charles Street.

Ms. Weitzman said that they had been advised by their attorneys to rescind the Certificate of Appropriateness for 128 Caroline Street due to the public notice.

Ms. Weitzman made a motion to rescind the Certificate of Appropriateness for 128 Caroline Street and re-advertise the application. Dr. Barile seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Weitzman said the action taken on the fence at 240 Charles Street did not receive a majority vote therefore it was invalid.

Mr. McFarland made a motion to rescind the Certificate of Appropriateness for the fence at 240 Charles Street. Ms. Weitzman seconded. The motion carried 6-0-1 with Mr. Scully abstaining.

Mr. McFarland commented that he had abstained from the earlier vote on the fence at 240 Charles Street due to the advice of the ARB attorneys, not because he was opposed to the project.

8. Litigation

Dr. Barile reminded the Board that the Conflict of Interest form was to be submitted in advance.

The Board discussed Dr. Barile remaining as the liaison for the ongoing court case.

Mr. Van Zandt made a motion to keep Dr. Barile the liaison. Ms. Pates seconded. The motion carried 6-0-1 with Dr. Barile abstaining.

Dr. Barile said that they had tabled the review of minutes for their closed session because the motion for a closed session meeting was not phrased properly.

The Board agreed to hold a closed session on January 25, 2016 after the supplemental meeting to further discuss the lawsuit.

ADJOURN

Meeting adjourned at 9:43 p.m.

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John Harris, ARB Chair